

they need to stay off welfare for good and to be good parents.

Family values are a big part of our national budget. Two years ago, our national budget reduced the deficit; that's good family values. But we increased the number of children in Head Start, we provided for immunizing all our children under 2, we made college loans more affordable and easier to repay, we increased tax relief for working parents, and we increased job training. We need to build on that family agenda, not tear it down.

The congressional majority seems to be determined to cut back on programs that advance our family values. How can you talk about family values in one breath and, in the next, take Head Start away from 50,000 poor children or cut back college loans and grants for students who need and deserve them or cut back worker training for people who are unemployed? But all that happened in the House of Representatives this week. They call it change. I say it

shortchanges America's families in the fight for the future. This vote is antifamily, and I won't let it stand.

It's not too late to build a legacy—to build on the legacy of family leave. We ought to invest in education, invest in our families, raise the minimum wage, target tax relief to raising children and educating them, protect the Medicare of our seniors, and protect the right of people to keep their health insurance if they change jobs or if someone in the family gets sick. These are the kind of things that are worthy of the legacy of family leave. We have to work hard so that we know that our families will be better off, so that we can make tomorrow better than today for every family.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from the Children's Inn at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, MD.

## Interview with Bob Edwards and Mara Liasson of National Public Radio August 7, 1995

### *Bosnia and Croatia*

*Mr. Edwards.* Well, Croatia is back into it, and we wonder how the Croat offensive affects the prospects of a U.N. withdrawal and the accompanying commitment of U.S. ground troops.

*The President.* Well, my guess is that if the Croat offensive concludes successfully in the Krajina area, as it appears to be doing, and that is the extent of it, that it will not increase the chances of the U.N. withdrawing. But it does change the kind of balance of play in the area. And when you put that with the new resolve of NATO and the willingness of the U.N. to let NATO use air power and the establishment of the Rapid Reaction Force, two things we worked very hard for in the last few weeks, it may create some new opportunities to work toward a resolution of this.

Now, we're concerned, and we've told the Croats we're concerned about anything that would spread the war, that would widen the war. But if the offensive concludes with the reestablishment of the dominance, the Croatia

in the Krajina area, then I think it will not increase the chances of U.N. withdrawal.

*Mr. Edwards.* In the absence of direct U.S. involvement, why should the American people care about this conflict?

*The President.* The American people should care, first of all, because if the war spreads in the Balkans to other areas it could destabilize many, many countries in which we have a vital interest and bring America into the fray. Secondly, we should care because an awful lot of human damage has been done there, and a lot of people's human rights have been violated, and we should try to minimize the loss of life and human suffering. Thirdly, we should care because it's the first real security crisis in Europe after the end of the cold war, and it is important that we, working with our European allies through the United Nations and through NATO, do as much as humanly possible to do, given the fact that when you have these kind of intra-ethnic conflicts within countries, to some extent, any outside power is going to be limited in stopping the killing until there is a

greater willingness to make peace. But we have to do our best to try to minimize the carnage, to try to keep it from spreading, and to try to demonstrate a consistent and determined and long-lasting commitment by our allies through the United Nations and through NATO to resolve this.

*Ms. Liasson.* Mr. President, there are tens of thousands of Krajina Serbs now who are being ethnically cleaned, and they're fleeing over the border into Bosnia. Can you tell us how that influx of Serbs into Bosnia will affect the conflict there? And also, what can you tell us about Croatian President Franjo Tudjman's intentions? Does he want to maintain the Bosnia Croat Federation, or do you think he wants an ethnically pure state of his own?

*The President.* Well, first, let's remember what gave rise to this offensive. There was a Bosnian Serb attack supported by the Krajina Serbs on the Bihac area of Bosnia, which is a Muslim area or at least a government area now. And President Tudjman ordered a counter-attack to try to relieve Bihac and, in the process, to try to secure the areas within Croatia under control of his government.

I believe that he wants to see the Croats and the Muslims stay in their confederation within Bosnia. And you know, the United States took the lead in brokering that confederation. I think that it's very important because it ended, in effect, one-half of the civil war within Bosnia. So I felt good about that. And I think it will endure. I believe that confederation will endure.

What impact the Krajina Serbs going over into Bosnian territory will have is, frankly, impossible to determine at this time. If they become members of the Bosnian Serb army, then it could have a destabilizing impact. But no one knows for sure. That's why I say that circumstances have changed there in a way that might give us the opportunity to make some new efforts at a diplomatic settlement, and I'm going to be talking with our allies over the next few days to discuss that.

*Ms. Liasson.* But before the Croat offensive started, you warned the Croatians not to target civilians and not to target U.N. peacekeepers. They seem to have ignored both of those warnings. Do you have any control over the Croats?

*The President.* No, but I think we have—I think we and the Germans have some influence with the Croats. And I think what appears

to have happened is they had more success than they had, I think, perhaps even imagined they might in the battle. And so they kept going until they had recovered that portion of their territory which had been previously under the dominance of the Krajina Serbs.

I do believe that President Tudjman will be reluctant to do anything that will knowingly spread the war and totally destabilize the situation in ways that undermine his interest and the interest of the Bosnian Croat Confederation within Bosnia. So, as I said, I'm hopeful that this will turn out to be something that will give us an avenue to a quicker diplomatic resolution, not a road to a longer war.

*Mr. Edwards.* This is the most important foreign policy problem of your Presidency, and you are seen as indecisive. Senator Dole has tried to take advantage of that. Is this frustrating to you in a situation such as Bosnia, where no action might actually be the best action?

*The President.* Well, first of all, I disagree that it's the most important foreign policy problem. It's the foreign policy problem that's the longest lasting and therefore the most publicized. But the most important things we have done, I think, you'd have to start out with our continued efforts with Russia and the other republics of the former Soviet Union to denuclearize; our efforts to stem the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, which have been very successful and which the United States has led; our efforts at peace in the Middle East. All those things, it seems to me, over the long run, in terms of America's vital interest, are more important.

The Bosnian situation is heartbreaking. And it is potentially very important to our security interests should it spread, which is why I have sent troops to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to try to make sure that it doesn't spread. But is it frustrating? Sure it is, because most of the people who criticize don't have a better alternative. And many of them who criticize don't have any alternative.

The United States, before I became President, made a decision not to send troops in the U.N. peacekeeping mission in Bosnia. Frankly, at the time, it's my understanding that our European allies agreed with that. They wanted to take the lead in dealing with this big security problem, the first one of the post-cold-war era. The U.N., in any case, was not supposed to be trying to determine the outcome

of the war but simply trying to minimize the violence and get the humanitarian aid through.

Now we have spent as much or more money as any country in supporting the peace process in Bosnia, in supporting the humanitarian aid and the airlift, and trying to keep the war out of the air, and doing all the things that we have done from our ships and from our bases, to fly literally tens of thousands of flights. We have also been responsible for taking the lead in establishing the alliance between the Bosnian Government and the Croatians. We took the lead in asserting the need for NATO to use its air power. In 1994, we had a pretty good year there because of this aggressive action on our part. And it fell apart when the United Nations decided not to let NATO use its power whenever a U.N. soldier had been taken hostage.

Now we have changed the ground rules on the ground with the Rapid Reaction Force, and we've got a new set of command and control rules for NATO. So we seem to be making some progress. There have been several convoys go in and out of Gorazde, for example, without being attacked.

I believe we have done all we could to work with our allies, and I think we have exercised all the influence we could, considering the fact that they have soldiers on the ground and we don't. And I do not believe that under these circumstances we should have put ground troops on the ground in the U.N. mission. So I think history will reflect that, given the options, none of which were very pleasant in a very difficult situation, that we have done the right things and that they were better than the alternatives available to us.

*Ms. Liasson.* Mr. President, recently you said the reason why the United States and NATO and the U.N. have all lost prestige in Bosnia is because they went around saying they were going to do something and then they didn't do it. In retrospect, would it have been better not to have said that you were going to lift the arms embargo and then help the Muslims with air strikes? Do you think you raised expectations there that couldn't be met?

*The President.* No because when I ran for President I made it clear that I would support a lifting of the arms embargo multilaterally. I never said I would lift it unilaterally. I was, frankly, surprised, given the record we had of Serbian aggression when I became President,

that our allies would not agree to lift the arms embargo multilaterally. But they felt it would put their own troops too much at risk, and they believed that it would not do what I thought, which was to induce the Bosnian Serbs to make a quick peace.

Let me say that air strikes cannot win a war, but they can raise the price of aggression. And if you believe as I do, that territorial disputes between the sides now could be resolved without the legitimate interests of any ethnic group being eroded, I think that's a very important reason for using air strikes to increase the price of aggression.

But it didn't happen in '93, so in '94, we got a different kind of agreement to use air power, our own air power, in return for not lifting the arms embargo on the Bosnian Government. And it worked. The Serbs and the Bosnian Government brought their heavy weapons into collection points. The safe areas were largely free from shelling and military activity. And the whole thing only came apart when, number one, no peace was reached in 1994 and, number two, when military activity started in the central part of the country spread to these safe areas and the U.N. would not permit NATO to strike back.

So that's what I would say. If you say for sure you're going to do something, you simply have to do it. And if you don't do it, you suffer. And that's what happened to the U.N. and the NATO. And because the United States is a part of those organizations and has a leading role in NATO, it hurt us as well. And that's why I told our allies I would try one more time to have NATO play a role in this, one more time to try to support them with their Rapid Reaction Force. But the United States could not be part of any endeavor that made commitments which were not kept. We have to keep commitments once we make them.

*Ms. Liasson.* You've talked, though, about the limits of the U.S. being able to dictate the outcome of something when we don't have troops on the ground. Does that mean that the U.S. can only lead if it's willing to commit troops in situations like this?

*The President.* As I said, we have exercised a leadership role in pushing the air power and leading the humanitarian air lift and putting our troops on the border and in getting the Croatians and the Bosnian Muslims to agree to a confederation. So in that sense, we have. But

our ability to exercise a leadership role when the British, the French, the Dutch, and the others who have troops on the ground believe that what we want to do will endanger their troops but not ours, since we're not there, is necessarily limited. But that is, after all, part of what we, I think, should be working toward in the post-cold-war world.

The United States, obviously, will have to make a decision whether we think we should run every show and totally dominate every crisis. But if we want to do that, we do have to be willing to have troops on the ground where others have troops on the ground. I believe that we have exercised a great deal of leadership, and I think it's been consistent with our interest in not having troops there in this U.N. mission. I could not have countenanced putting American troops in the position where they could be fired upon and taken as hostages without firing back. I don't believe in that. I don't think that's what the United States is all about. And I do not believe the United States should be there trying to win this war on the ground, as a combatant. I don't believe in that. So I have said that I would not send troops there unless it's necessary to take our allies out.

#### *Teenage Smoking*

*Mr. Edwards.* You're wrestling with a difficult decision on tobacco. Why not let the FDA regulate tobacco? Polls show a lot of support for regulating smoking among teenagers.

*The President.* Well, I don't know that it's such a difficult decision. We're working through what our options are, and I've talked with Dr. Kessler at the FDA. He has asked me to do that, and we've been involved with him and discussed that.

But this country has to do something about the problem of teenage smoking. It's going back up. We know that a significant percentage of young people who start to smoke will smoke consistently throughout their lives, and that if they do, a significant percentage of them will die from diseases directly related to their smoking. We know that if we wanted to lower the cost of health care and increase the life expectancy of our people and improve the health of the American people, there's almost nothing you could do that would have a bigger impact than dramatically reducing the number of young people who stop smoking or who never start smoking. So we have to have a vigorous response

to that, and I expect to have an announcement on that in the next several days—not too far away.

*Ms. Liasson.* Is it possible to regulate tobacco as a drug and not spark years of litigation?

*The President.* Well, that's one of the things that bothers me. You know, I think we need a tough and mandatory type program, but I don't want to see us in a position where we act like we're going to do something but we wind up in years and years and years of costly litigation while kids continue to be bombarded with advertisements plainly designed to get them to smoke, with all kinds of promotional activities while they can still buy cigarettes in vending machines, while there's no real comprehensive national law against their buying cigarettes. And meanwhile, these lawsuits drag on.

So I'm concerned about that. And that's one of the reasons I think that Dr. Kessler and the FDA have wanted to have a series of conversations with the White House because everybody involved in this, at least from our point of view, wants to focus on the whole problem of children smoking and how to stop it and to stop it from starting.

*Mr. Edwards.* You say mandatory, you're not going to have any kind of voluntary program for the industry?

*The President.* Well, I believe we have to have some means of knowing that whatever we all agree to, whatever people say they're going to do is done. And I think we need some strength there. So we'll just—I'm looking at what my options are, and I expect to have an announcement in the near future. You won't be waiting long to know how we're going to resolve this. But there will be a strong commitment here to doing something about children smoking.

*Ms. Liasson.* Are you saying the tobacco industry can't be trusted to comply with some kind of a voluntary deal?

*The President.* I've already talked a lot about this. I'll have more to say in the next few days.

#### *Relief for Middle Class*

*Mr. Edwards.* You've spoken a lot about the squeeze on the American middle class, although the economy is good, incomes are not keeping up, people are working harder for less, and they've been anxious about their futures. Without control of Congress, what can you do to relieve some of that anxiety?

*The President.* Well, one thing that I can do is to keep trying to grow the economy and to keep following policies that will lead to balanced and fair growth. That's what we were trying to do with the Japanese trade action, for example. I have been responsible for a greater expansion of trade than any other administration, I think, than any other President, with NAFTA and GATT and 80 separate trade agreements. But I also want fair trade. I want trade that will strengthen the jobs and the incomes of America's workers, which is why I took the action I did with Japan with regard to auto parts and autos.

We also can make sure that the laws we have on the books are enforced in a way that tend to support good jobs and good wages. That's why I don't favor, for example, a repeal of the Davis-Bacon law or some other laws that are on the Government's books which at least say when we're doing business we want to try to support a high-wage, high-opportunity society.

But there are things that I think this Congress can do and some other things I think they shouldn't do. And I'll just—let me just give you three examples very quickly. Two things I think they should do. I think they ought to raise the minimum wage. The minimum wage has had bipartisan support in the past, and I think has broad bipartisan support among the American people. If this Congress does not raise the minimum wage, as I have asked it to do, we'll have the lowest minimum wage we've had in 40 years in terms of real purchasing power next year. That's not my idea of the kind of country I'm trying to create for the 21st century. I don't want a hard-work, low-wage America. I want a high-opportunity, high-growth America.

The second thing they could do is to pass the bill I have proposed which has bipartisan support to create a "GI bill" for America's workers. And our proposal is to take the 70 or so separate training programs the Government has now, collapse them, put them in a big pot of cash, and give workers who are unemployed or who are underemployed a voucher which they can take to their local community college worth \$2,500 or so a year for up to 2 years to get the training and education they need. This would go around the Federal Government, the State government, and the local government. This is just something we could give to unemployed Americans, people that lose their jobs and need to acquire new skills. Almost every

American now is within driving distance of a community college or other fine training institute. They'd make the decisions, and all they'd have to do is prove they spent the money at the appropriate place. They could pass that.

The third thing that Congress should do is to do no harm—do no harm. They are on a path now which will dramatically increase the middle class squeeze. By cutting all this education money, they are cutting off the future for millions of Americans. By cutting all the Medicare and Medicaid money, what they are doing is to make sure that more and more middle class people who are middle-aged will have to spend much higher percentages of their incomes supporting their elderly parents and therefore will have less to spend on themselves and in educating their own children. And none of that is necessary to balance the budget. I have given them an alternative.

So they should raise the minimum wage, pass the "GI bill" for America's workers, and do no harm on education and health care. Those things will help us.

But you know, we've never had a period like this before, really, where we've got 7 million new jobs; 2½ million new homeowners; 1½ million new businesses, the largest number in American history in this period of time; very high stock market—about 4,700—rapid growth of corporate profits; and stagnant wages for half the American workers. We've got to turn that around. And these things will help.

#### 1996 Election

*Ms. Liasson.* Mr. President, you did a pretty good job in 1992 figuring out what the election was going to be about, what was on people's minds. What do you think the election of 1996 is going to be about? What are the three or four top issues that you think Americans care most about right now?

*The President.* Well, in 1996, I think the election will be—there will be economic issues still at the forefront, more in terms of family security. That is, I think that people will see the economy as a two-step process, not a one-step process. And I hope maybe I can communicate that more clearly. That is, what we started doing—reducing the deficit, expanding trade, increasing investment in technology, promoting defense conversion, all those things—they produce a lot of jobs, but now we have to raise incomes and a sense of family security. So I

think there will be a whole cluster of family security issues that are economic and that deal with the whole issue of opportunity.

Then I believe there will be some significant debates about social issues and what kind of responsibilities we have individually and to each other in this society. If we don't get welfare reform legislation through, that will be an issue. If there's a continuing effort to undermine law enforcement as there has been now in the Congress—the leaders of Congress told me, for example, after Oklahoma City they would have the antiterrorism bill on my desk by Memorial Day; that's late May. Here we are almost to mid-August and no sign of the bill. I think that will be an issue because Americans are still concerned about their security.

And then the third set of issues will be about—so the opportunity issues, responsibility issues, and then I think there will be a set of issues that have to do with how we're going to move together into the 21st century. How are we going to handle our diversity? What's the responsible way to handle our immigration problems, which are considerable?

So those are the kinds of things that I think will dominate this election. It's basically, this is one more jumping off stage, the last one we'll have before the next century. And I hope that it will be dominated by two competing visions of what America will look like in the next century and how we will live and how we will work together.

*Mr. Edwards.* But the strongest sentiment we're hearing from voters seem to reject both visions. They seem to be looking for a third party, a third force to put their faith in. What is that—

*The President.* I don't know that they reject both visions. I think they consistently accept my vision when they hear it. It's almost impossible for people to know what's going on out there given the nature of communications today. There's a lot of information, but it's always on something new day-in and day-out. And it tends to emphasize conflict over achievement. And so I think what we need is an election to see that.

And also, a lot of people are kind of frustrated with their own lives and don't see the connection between governmental action on the one hand and improvements in their circumstances on the other. All of this is to be expected in a time of transition and difficulty. But I basically

think the prognosis for America's future is quite bright. And if somebody wants to run as a third party candidate they ought to, but that's like—that's "the buyer's remorse" and "the grass is always greener on the other side," and all of that. You know, you hear all of that.

But I believe that the '96 election will really give me an opportunity I have not had since I've been here to get out and talk about what we've done that we promised to do, what difference it's made for America, and what still needs to be done. I think the third category should be the most important thing, what are we going to do tomorrow? But I'm not at all pessimistic about where America is or where this administration is. We've done a lot of things that were very important. We've kept up very high percentages of our commitments. We've had a great deal of success with the efforts that we've made, and I look forward to having a chance to discuss that. But meanwhile, I'm going to try to delay the onset of the political season as long as possible and just keep doing my job.

*Mr. Edwards.* But how can you say that the American people share your vision? A majority did not elect you and then came the '94 election that—

*The President.* Yes, but that doesn't mean—the American people didn't ratify the contract on America. What they ratified—there were two things. A lot of the people who voted in '92 were disillusioned and didn't vote because they'd been fed a steady diet of bad news and because their own circumstances hadn't improved. And we said this many new jobs came into the economy and the deficit was reduced by 50 percent for 3 years in a row for the first time since Harry Truman was President. Huge numbers of voters said, "I just don't believe it; I just don't believe it," because their lives weren't better, and they didn't hear about it in their regular communications. They were anxiety ridden; they were frustrated; they were angry. The Republicans said, "Vote for us, we've got a plan, and the first item is balancing the budget." All the research after the election showed that that's what people knew.

Now, there are two plans to balance the budget. I believe two-thirds of the American people agree with my way. I think they'd rather take a little longer, have a smaller tax cut and protect the incomes of elderly Americans on Medicare, protect our investments in education

from Head Start to affordable college loans and not gut the environment. That's what I believe. I believe the American people want a high-wage, high-growth, high-opportunity future, with safe streets and a clean environment, where people have a chance to make the most of their own lives. I believe that's what they really want. And I think they believe we ought to work together toward that.

And my referendum will come in '96, and we'll just see. But there's a lot—if you look at the research, I think there is a lot of common ground in America. I believe the American people, left to their own devices, would come to commonsense, progressive conclusions on a lot of these issues. And I think the political system basically seeks to divide them in little slices and wedges to advance the causes of whoever's doing the dividing. But that's not really what the American people want, which is why they often say, "I'd like a third way," because they're sick of partisan bickering in Washington and people who are trying to advance their short-term interest at the expense of the long-term public interest in this country.

#### *Federal Budget*

*Ms. Liasson.* I wanted to ask you about some partisan bickering that's coming up pretty soon, which is the big battle over the budget in the fall. Now, you've said you didn't want to pile up a stack of vetoes, you've threatened quite a few of them. But Republicans say they don't believe that you're going to make good on all these threats, especially if it means that agencies will close or if the Government can't borrow the money to send out benefit checks. Are you willing to see the Government shut down if that's what it takes to protect your priorities?

*The President.* Well, first of all, let's look at what they're threatening to do. And the American people need to know it as unprecedented. They are responsible. If the Government gets shut down, it will be their responsibility. They will have to vote or not vote to lift the debt ceiling. They will have to vote or not vote for continuing resolutions to let this Government go on. I will have no role in that; that is their responsibility.

My responsibility was fulfilled when I offered them an alternative balanced budget and a willingness to discuss it. So far, none of them have been willing to discuss anything. They have not been willing to discuss this. They seem deter-

mined—for example, they seemed absolutely determined to raise the cost of Medicare in copayments, in premiums and deductibles to seniors with incomes of \$25,000 a year or less. They seem determined to raise the cost of going to college. They seem determined to cut kids off Head Start. They seem determined to gut the environmental laws of this country when none of that is necessary to balance the budget, and they haven't even discussed it with me.

So what I'm going to do is—and these veto threats that I've been issuing, they're really sort of veto notices. I'm just trying to be as forthright and honest and forthcoming as I can with people who so far have not expressed any interest in having any dialog with me. It's a funny way to do business. But if you ask me am I going to blink at the end and basically, to avoid shutting down the Government, risk shutting down America 10 or 15 years from now because of the costs we're taking, the answer to that is, no, I am not going to blink at the end. As awful as it is, it would be better to shut the Government down for a few days than to shut the country down a few years from now because we took a radical and unwarranted road here that the American people never voted for, don't believe in.

So I think it's easy to over-read the results of the '94 election. I think you could convincingly argue that the NRA put the House of Representatives in Republican hands if you look at the number of short races, close races that were turned there. But the other voters that were voting for the Republicans and the other voters that were staying home weren't ratifying a repeal on the assault weapons ban or a repeal of the Brady bill.

So I don't think you can make these kind of connections. I'm just going to stand up and fight for what I believe in but be willing to work with them. But if they don't ever want to work with me and they keep trying to push this country off the brink, I cannot in good conscience let America gut its commitment to education from Head Start for poor children to affordable college loans for college students, when I know that that is the key to our economic future. And I know it's the only way to expand middle class incomes over the long run. I cannot in good conscience let a budget go through which essentially undermines our ability to provide for clean air, clean water, and

pure food when I know good and well the American people never voted for that in 1994.

And I certainly have no intention of destroying Medicare under the guise of saving it when I know we can fix the Medicare Trust Fund, which does not have anything to do—the Medicare Trust Fund that the Republicans are always talking about is in some trouble, less trouble than when I took office. I pushed the insolvency date out 2 or 3 years already, and I know we can fix that and never touch the premiums, the copays, and the deductibles. And they know it, too. They know this has nothing to do with fixing the Medicare Trust Fund.

So we ought to get together like civilized human beings and good Americans and do what's best for the American people. The one time I thought we were going to do it was when I had the meeting with the Speaker up in New Hampshire and that fellow asked us a nice question, and we shook hands on it. We said, yes, we'd appoint a commission like a base closing commission to look into political reform. And 5 days after I got back I sent a letter to the Speaker suggesting that we ought to appoint this commission in the same way the base closing commission was appointed. Five weeks later I still hadn't gotten an answer to my letter. I still haven't gotten an answer to my letter. It's been 7 or 8 weeks now. So I appointed two distinguished Americans, John Gardner and Doris Kearns Goodwin, to go try to work this out. They haven't seen the Speaker either.

So this is a different world up here. The American people don't understand this. I think most Americans are still conservative and old-fashioned in the best sense. They think when

you shake hands, especially when you do it in broad daylight in front of the whole country, you ought to do what you say you're going to do. And I intend to do it. That's just the way I am. It's the way I was brought up. I don't understand this. I don't understand people that don't talk to one another and don't try to see one another's point of view and that don't try to reach common accord. So that door over there is going to stay open all the way, but I will not be—I will not be blackmailed into selling the American people's future down the drain to avoid a train wreck. Better a train wreck for a day or 3 or 4, better political damage to Bill Clinton than damaging the future of millions and millions and millions of Americans. I'm just not going to do it.

*Mr. Edwards.* Thank you, Mr. President.

*The President.* Thank you.

#### *China*

*Ms. Liasson.* Mr. President, just one quick yes or no question. Should Mrs. Clinton go to China if Harry Wu is still held?

*The President.* Well, no decision has yet been made on that, and we're just going to follow events as they develop and try to make a good decision. It's an important conference. The United States will be represented, but no decision has been made yet about whether she will go.

NOTE: The interview began at 1:48 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House, and it was recorded for broadcast on August 9. The final question referred to Harry Wu, human rights activist imprisoned in China.

## Remarks on Environmental Protection in Baltimore, Maryland August 8, 1995

Thank you very much. As you can tell, the Vice President really has no strong convictions about this issue. [*Laughter*] That's the darnedest stump speech I've heard in a long time. I thought for a minute he was a write-in candidate for mayor here. [*Laughter*] It was a great speech, and thank you for what you said.

Thank you, Doris McGuigan, and thank you to all of your allies here for reminding us what's

really behind all these issues. One of the biggest problems we have in Washington, even though it's very close to Baltimore—one of the biggest problems we have is having people there remember that the decisions they make there affect how you live here and then making sure that people who live here understand the impact of the decisions that are made there. You have helped us, every one of you—Doris, for what